



STATE SENATOR

BILL WHITE

32ND SENATORIAL DISTRICT



COVID-19 Assistance for Workers

If you have found yourself on this page, please know that you are not alone. Many workers from our community have similar challenges, questions and concerns as we all readjust to the ripples of the coronavirus. I have compiled these quick links to answers for some of the most common questions about the options that are now available to help workers. Please feel free to reach out to my office if you require additional information or assistance in Dade, Newton or Jasper counties.

Updates are made daily, so please check the [website](#) for the latest information and resources.

Economic Impact Payments

Starting this week, the federal government will be issuing [individual stimulus checks](#) to help American workers recover from some of the financial toil caused by the virus. Qualifying individuals who earn less than \$75,000 will receive a single payout of \$1,200, and married couples who earn less than \$150,000 will receive a single payout of \$2,400. An additional \$500 per dependent will also be dispersed. The stimulus checks will be issued to you in the same manner as your income tax refund. So if you have already filed your 2019 income tax return, no further action is needed. Direct deposits begin the week of April 12, and paper checks will be mailed the week of April 24, 2020.

I HAVE LOST MY JOB BECAUSE OF COVID-19. WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) Program

Missouri's unemployment program is still in effect. However, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 included the FPUC program in its provisions. [FPUC](#) provides an additional \$600 a week for those eligible for at least one dollar of unemployment compensation benefits. These [federal supplement payments](#) will begin the week of April 12, 2020, and will retroactively apply to the weeks of March 29 through July 25, 2020. During this period, eligible claimants who qualify for regular unemployment payments will receive the extra \$600 a week.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program includes provisions regarding benefits for self-employed workers. The [Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations](#) continues to update information as this program becomes operational. The Division of Employment Security (DES) will begin processing claims the week of April 19, 2020, and individuals who are ineligible for regular unemployment benefits may apply for PUA [here](#). After an application is submitted, continue to regularly monitor the account, provide the required documentation and be prepared to answer questions regarding your application. DES will contact applicants when and if more action is needed.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Employee Paid Leave Rights (FFCRA)

These [provisions](#) will be in effect through December 31, 2020. Covered employees are eligible for:

- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the regular pay rate if a person is unable to work because they are following quarantine orders, experiencing symptoms or seeking medical attention for the virus;
- Two weeks (80 hours) of paid sick leave at 2/3 the regular rate if a person is unable to work because they provide care for someone who is subject to quarantine orders or if they provide care for a child whose school or daycare is closed because of the virus.

An additional ten weeks of paid expanded family and medical leave may be used if a person is unable to work because they lack suitable child care because of the pandemic.

DO I QUALIFY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT?

Unemployment [benefits](#) are only available to employees that are laid off solely because of the coronavirus and **no fault of their own**. Most employees that are currently working and quit the job will not be eligible for unemployment.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

For more information on federal legislation, unemployment benefits, worker's compensation or discrimination for Missouri workers, click [here](#).

Please call my office at (573) 751-2173 or email bill.white@senate.mo.gov if you require additional information or assistance. We will overcome this brief setback if we all work distantly together!